

# National Information Literacy Framework (Scotland): Pioneering Work to Influence Policy Making or Tinkering at the Edges?

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## ABSTRACT

This article examines the creation of the National Information Literacy Framework for Scotland, from its original concept linking secondary and tertiary education to an expanded framework including primary education, lifelong learning, the workplace, and adult literacies. It discusses the framework's evolution from the original concept through to the development, piloting, restructuring, and use of the framework. It reflects on how the project engaged with policy and advocacy issues in order to gain recognition of the term information literacy. The policies and strategies it used to influence the inclusion of *information literacy* within the school curriculum through channels such as the Scottish Parliamentary E-petitions mechanism and engaging with the consultation process on the development of the new Scottish curriculum, "Curriculum for Excellence." It looks at the project's engagement in the wider world outside the academy and its conclusion that to be "effective, an information literacy policy must be firmly pegged to the information, lifelong learning, inclusion, and digital policies of the state." The article concludes that the project did influence information literacy practice, strategies, and policy making locally, nationally, and internationally. It discusses the reasons for that success, the lessons learned, and then examines the issue of sustainability and the future of the framework.

## ORIGINAL CONCEPT

Developing a National Information Literacy Framework for Scotland emerged as a result of two research projects: the Drumchapel Project (McLelland & Crawford, 2004), which looked at the information and communications technology (ICT) skills of school pupils in a deprived area

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of Glasgow and a study of Glasgow Caledonian University students and alumni (Crawford, De Vicente, & Clink, 2004), which looked at the link between the use of electronic information services and information literacy. The former found that school pupils were not acquiring basic information literacy (IL) skills, which they could develop further at university, use in the workplace or for leisure purposes. This suggested the need for an information literacy strategy that would link secondary and tertiary education. The latter highlighted the fact that alumni recognized that information-seeking skills learned at university could be applied to the world of work.

The original concept in October 2004 was a one-year innovative national pilot to develop an information literacy framework with secondary and tertiary partners. Its initial aim was to produce secondary school leavers (sixteen- to eighteen-year-olds who were leaving school having completed their school education) in Scotland with a skill set that further education could recognize and develop or which could be applied to the world of work.

### DEVELOPING A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

To develop the National Information Literacy Framework Scotland (NILFS, 2008c) I examined other frameworks, models, and definitions at home and abroad (NILFS, 2008a). Discussions were held with relevant bodies and individuals to learn from them and incorporate best practice but most of all not to “reinvent the wheel.”

#### *Declarations and Strategies*

Of the many international declarations and national strategies on information literacy, most notable is the *Prague Declaration: Towards an Information Literate Society* (2003). It proposed basic principles on information literacy as a key to social, cultural, and economic development of nations, communities, institutions, and individuals. The 2005 Alexandria High-Level Colloquium reinforced this. It supported political lobbying and urges “governments and intergovernmental organizations to pursue policies and programmes to promote information literacy and lifelong learning” (Garner, 2006, p. 4).

While the UK did have policy statements, it lagged behind the United States and Australia in practical implementation of information literacy policies. The project sought to change that.

#### *Models, Frameworks, and Definitions*

There are numerous models, both at national and international levels; however, there is a dearth of frameworks derived from the models. In the UK some action frameworks were developed in higher education based on the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) Seven Pillars Model (SCONUL, 2004).

Some useful models were found abroad. The Australian and New Zealand Institute for Information Literacy (ANZIIL) had the *ANZIIL Framework—Principles Standards and Practice* (Bundy, 2004), which supported the embedding of information literacy in the design and teaching of educational programs across the curriculum. In the United States the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) developed the *Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning*, which provided “a conceptual framework and broad guidelines for describing the information literate student” (AASL and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology [AECT], 1998). In the tertiary sector (institutions of higher education) the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) published the *ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (ACRL, 2000) providing

a framework for assessing the information literate individual. It also extended the work of the American Association of School Librarians Task Force on Information Literacy Standards, thereby providing higher education an opportunity to articulate its information literacy competencies with those of K-12 so that a continuum of expectations develops for students at all levels. The competencies presented here outline the process by which faculty, librarians and others pinpoint specific indicators that identify a student as information literate.

There was, however, no national activity in Scotland that compared with these initiatives. Research confirmed that while there were valuable local initiatives taking place in both the secondary and tertiary sectors there was no overall coordinated IL strategy. There was however enough good practice on which to plan an IL framework (Crawford & Irving, 2005, 2007). In addition the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) Information Literacy group had developed an IL definition (CILIP, 2004) that would be “understandable by all information-using communities in the UK,” as they felt that in “an era of lifelong learning, this effectively means that information literacy has relevance for all ages from primary school to senior citizens (CILIP, 2004b, §1).” The definition and skills or competencies were seen to “cross all media” as “IL is about information in all forms” (CILIP, 2009, §2).

#### *Existing Practice*

As stated above, higher education activity tended to be based on the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy Model (2007). The University of Abertay was a good example of the model in use in Scotland (NILFS, 2008b; SCONUL, 2004).

Schools and local authorities had developed models to suit their needs linked to the curriculum. The most notable of these were Edinburgh's EXPLORE model and North Ayrshire Education Resources Toolkit (NILFS, 2008a).

To illuminate what IL skills, if any, students brought to university, further research was carried out (Irving, 2006a). While the research samples were small and based on Glasgow Universities and two schools from North Ayrshire where Glasgow students are likely to come from, the findings suggested that

- in schools, information literacy skills were generally taught in first and second year (aged twelve to thirteen) but not subsequently reinforced in the curriculum, resulting in fragmented levels of knowledge and usage for the students' remaining years at school.
- in higher education, students arriving at university have generally poor or limited information literacy skills. For some these skills will be enhanced but many will leave as they arrived. The level of skills varied, depending on the student, the course, the school they came from and their home life.

The findings supported an interim report by HMIe (Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education, 2005) on the *Integration of Information and Communication Technology in Scottish Schools*. The report also stated, "Few schools have systematic approaches to developing information literacy to ensure that all pupils acquired this set of skills [information literacy] progressively as part of their passport of core and life skills." Possible reasons for few schools having systematic approaches could be that "for many teachers information literacy was considered as cross-curriculum skills building, separate from their subject rather than a way of learning and teaching" (Williams & Wavell, 2006, p. vi).

These findings reinforced the project's belief that teaching information literacy skills should begin at school (Irving & Crawford, 2006).

#### *Government Policies and Strategies*

Tentative contacts made by the project director with the Scottish Executive Education Department and education bodies showed that there was little awareness about what information literacy actually is. Most believed either that the issue was being dealt with elsewhere or did not understand what it meant or what could be done. It also became clear that the education bodies were acting on priorities emerging from the Scottish Executive,<sup>1</sup> which failed to recognize the importance of IL and therefore had not identified it as part of the school curriculum. If progress was to be made, it would be necessary to influence Scottish Government policy making.

The Scottish Parliament provided such an opportunity through its petition system and the right of a citizen to raise an issue through either a Scottish Executive department or through their MSP (Member of the Scottish Parliament). As the former had been unsuccessful, the latter was used. The petition system also provided an opportunity to address this issue strategically rather than approach individual agencies. The petition by

Dr. John Crawford (director of the Scottish Information Literacy Project) "called on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Executive to ensure that national school curriculum recognizes the importance of information literacy as a key lifelong learning skill" (Scottish Parliament, 2005a, §1).

The petition was successful attracting 710 signatures (about twice the average figure): 415 from Scotland, 186 from England, 31 from Wales, and the rest from other parts of the world, including Canada, the United States, and Australia. Signatories included some leading figures in the worldwide IL movement. As a result of the high number of signatures, the petition was chosen as one of three to make a short presentation to the Petitions Committee and answer questions from them. After listening to the evidence the committee decided to seek comments from a range of educational NGOs (nongovernment organizations) plus relevant trade unions in the teaching profession and the overarching university body (Universities Scotland). The public sector trade union (Unison) representing school librarians and the School Library Association in Scotland (SLA Scotland) and the body for Further Education Colleges also responded to the consultation. Most responses were favorable including those from HMIE, Learning and Teaching Scotland (funded by the Scottish Government and a key player in education in Scotland), Universities Scotland (the representative body of Scotland's twenty-one universities and higher education colleges), School Library Association Scotland and Unison School Librarians. The project commented on the responses and sympathetic bodies also submitted further evidence including the U.S. National Forum on IL. Their international perspective was particularly welcome.

Based upon the evidence collected the committee closed the petition. One committee member, an MSP, stated:

All the responses seem to support the petitioner. The responses from the Scottish Executive, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, the Educational Institute of Scotland and the Scottish Qualifications Authority in particular clearly support "A Curriculum for Excellence" as the way forward. The petitioner has therefore been pushing at an open door and no further action on the petition is needed. (Scottish Parliament, 2006)

While "pushing at an open door" was perhaps a rather optimistic assessment, the majority of favorable responses could be used as ammunition for future advocacy. The experience with the petition highlighted the need for advocacy to encourage policy making at a national level.

One such opportunity was A Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) mentioned by the committee member. Its aim was to "achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18 . . . for children and young people through their education, wherever they are being educated" (Learning

and Teaching Scotland, n.d., “Understanding the curriculum: What is curriculum for excellence,” §1–2). Its stated purpose is to ensure that

all the children and young people of Scotland develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future. These are summed up in the detailed wording of the four capacities. (Learning and Teaching Scotland, n.d.)

These are to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen, and an effective contributor.

While the change in curriculum was seen initially as a set back in the development of the framework, the project soon recognized it as an opportunity to influence and advocate for the importance of IL. Particularly as Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS), the body tasked with developing the CfE for the Scottish Government, was seeking input from professionals on the shape of the new curriculum.

The main issues arising from an initial meeting with the CfE team highlighted that the changes were fundamental with a move toward a “3–18 curriculum” (a curriculum covering children’s education from the age of three to eighteen years old) rather than the existing three separate curriculums for three- to five-year-olds, five- to fourteen-year-olds and fourteen- to eighteen-year-olds, creating cohesion and progression. It was important to link IL to this cohesion and progression as well as clarify the confusion between study skills, library skills, information skills, information-handling skills, and IL. Those interested in IL needed to contribute to the curriculum review, raise IL’s profile, and lobby for its inclusion in the curriculum.

#### *Mapping to Nationally Recognized Qualification Levels*

With the curriculum fundamentally changing, the project decided to map IL skills against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF, 2007). SCQF supported a continuous learning process understood by other learning providers. It also had key players in Scotland and was nationally recognized in education, the workplace, and lifelong learning. It lent authority to the planned national IL framework.

#### **DRAFT FRAMEWORK**

Preliminary work on the development of a framework was supported by funding from Learndirect Scotland (a nongovernment organization that offered independent, free advice on adult further education courses, training, and funding in Scotland). The draft framework was funded by Eduserv (a nonprofit organization) and developed with the project’s cross-sector partners.

The draft framework was developed using the SCQF aims, structure, and key features in conjunction with the Scottish Qualifications Authority Core Skills (SQA, n.d.) framework as they:

- defined learning in terms of statements of skills, knowledge and understanding, and
- enabled the notional leveling process and outcomes to become transparent and clearly understood by other learning providers, receiving organisations and . . . employers to meet the needs of the lifelong learner more effectively.

The starting point for developing the framework was an existing SQA national qualification—Information Handling Skills Intermediate 2 qualification (SQA, 2004). This was used as a template for drawing up equivalent SCQF levels one to four and six to seven covering the secondary schools and further education (FE) colleges.

Higher education (HE) covers SCQF levels eight to twelve. The skills used for this section are the seven headline skills from the SCONUL Seven Pillars Model for Information Literacy. Exemplars of how two universities (University of Abertay and Loughborough) had adopted and modified this model to create information literacy frameworks for their own institutions were included in the framework appendices (NILFS, 2008b).

The SCQF levels do not cover primary schools but there was good practice in this area covering the Scottish 5–14 curriculum. It was important to include this work as it forms the building blocks for other sectors and is part of lifelong learning. Discussions took place with two local authority education resource services (Edinburgh and North Ayrshire identified as best practice) regarding the use of their material. An important element was that their models and toolkits

- were being used within their authority primary schools and would be rolled out to secondary schools, and
- had plans to develop current material to fit the 3–18 Curriculum for Excellence (Learning and Teaching Scotland, n.d., “Understanding the curriculum: What is curriculum for excellence”).

To cover the world of work, the framework incorporated and highlighted the CILIP definition of information literacy skills and competences (2004) as it included all information-using communities. There are no levels so this provides an area for further research.

The models and definitions incorporated into the draft framework were compared. This comparison showed that there were common themes running through the different models and definitions, demonstrating that despite the different terms used there was commonality. By using the SCQF framework and existing models and definitions we could demonstrate a continuing learning process through identifying a learning pathway as part of an educational guidance or personal development planning process.

To set the framework in context and support advocacy, additional information sections were added:

- Background information, provenance, acknowledgements
- Information literacy—what it is
- Information literacy and lifelong learning
- Information literacy education
- Use of the Information Literacy framework
- Appendices

As a result of the inclusion of the above the draft framework was a lengthy sixty-eight-page document, necessary to educate the wider community and support advocacy and implementation of the framework.

#### *Evaluation and Restructuring of the Framework*

Informal/anecdotal feedback indicated that the draft framework and the work of the project were being used to support existing practice and/or move practice on. In many cases it had been a catalyst for information literacy activities. In 2007–8 we undertook a more formal assessment in the form of an online evaluation survey that examined

- the draft—how it was rated and what purposes it was used for;
- piloting—whether the framework had been piloted and in what way, if it had not been piloted, the reasons why;
- restructuring the framework—whether the framework needed to be restructured and any comments/suggestions on how it could be improved.

The survey was publicized to project partners in schools, further education colleges, universities, and different workplaces plus adult literacy initiatives; the framework target audience; the CILIP Information Literacy Group; relevant professional bodies and e-mail discussion lists. While the number of completed surveys was not great, it did provide some useful evidence of usage and suggestions.

What emerged was the need to transform the sixty-eight-page draft information literacy framework into a more flexible tool that enabled case studies and exemplars of good practice to be added. Work also needed to be done on

- linking the schools and further education college sector to the Curriculum for Excellence. Specifically, this meant the Literacy Across Learning outcomes and experiences that illustrated the progressional nature of literacy skills (including information/critical literacy) and their important role in all learning;
- linking to the Scottish Government's Skills for Scotland: a lifelong skills strategy in the lifelong learning sector;



- expanding the lifelong learning section as a result of research and development work conducted in the workplace and adult literacies.

On the lifelong learning side CILIP's information literacy definition does not specify levels or depths of skills. However, research carried out by the project into the role of *Information Literacy in the Workplace: A Qualitative Exploratory Study* (Crawford & Irving, 2009) funded by the British Academy determined that "those in the workplace would need to look at how individuals define information literacy in terms of their own qualifications, training and work experience" (p. 34); while those involved in adult or community learning could use levels within the other sectors that they feel are appropriate. The study helped us to increase the number of workplace partners and introduced us to adult literacy networks and encouraged us to look at the role of public libraries in developing information literacy training programs.

The evaluation survey confirmed much of our thinking and was helpful in the restructuring of the draft framework.

The draft document was subsequently transferred to a weblog (NILFS, 2008c) as this Web 2.0 tool offered a range of flexible options. The static pages could contain the framework details while the blog postings would facilitate the communication of case studies, exemplars of good practice, news, activities, and developments. It would enable interested parties to comment on the postings or on the framework pages.

#### *Framework Case Studies and Exemplars of Good Practice*

The project's advisory group and partners had determined that the framework needed to be enriched with exemplars of good practice (Irving, 2009). This would demonstrate how specific competencies can be applied in practice for different subjects, levels of pupils/students; how this could be linked to the framework; and links to higher-level complex thinking skills and innovation.

This was a departure from other national frameworks developed in Australia, New Zealand, and America, which only have skills levels. It would show through the exemplars how the skills had been mapped into course design, recognizing different modes of teaching and learning. For example, evidence-based, problem-based, and target disciplines that value information link with further developments including educational development strategies. Strategies such as the Curriculum for Excellence in schools and the Further Education college sector, specifically the Literacy Across Learning Outcomes and Experiences (Learning and Teaching Scotland, n.d.), which illustrates the progressional nature of literacy skills (including what they refer to as information/critical literacy) and how these play an important role in all learning initiatives within further and higher education.

While some exemplars were identified through the framework piloting exercise, there was a need for more. The project team and some of the project partners held discussions with senior personnel at LTS. All emphasized the importance of including exemplars drawn from real life experience. This led to a project with the Curriculum for Excellence Literacy team and the LTS online team. The purpose was to identify exemplars in the cross-curricular area of information literacy for dissemination through the LTS Online Service. This offered an important mechanism to reach education authority and school staff to inform and support them. North Lanarkshire Council, Education Resource Service, Information and Learning Resources, City of Edinburgh Council, Children and Families Department, and North Ayrshire Education Resources Service advised on the work and supported it. The project identified thirteen case studies, but the LTS Curriculum for Excellence Literacy team approved and placed on their website only those linked to the new curriculum.

On a government level the Scottish Government (2007) published *Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy*. This set out its ambitions for skills in a lifelong learning context from cradle to grave. The strategy defined three major areas in which change was required: a focus on individual development; a response to the needs of the economy and the demand of employers; and the creation of cohesive structures. One of our workplace partners (the Scottish Government Information Services) identified the key civil servant responsible for this strategy. Following a lengthy period, there was agreement that the project would submit a number of information literacy case studies from different sectors. This later was reduced to one workplace case study: that of the Scottish Government Information Services (2008).

#### *Use of the Framework*

Informal feedback indicated that the draft framework and the work of the project was supporting or furthering existing practice. In many cases, it had been a catalyst for information literacy activities. Respondents to the evaluative survey reported that they had used the framework

- as part of an information literacy skills audit;
- to develop information literacy through the school via their library development plan;
- for information;
- to structure research skills workshops;
- as a checklist;
- as background information which can be related to other potential developments within the wider UK context;
- to inform an Institutions Information Literacy framework; and
- to inform planning.

The following quotes summarize both practical and advocacy use:

To promote the need for structured study skill lessons and using the framework to develop the lessons for pupils in secondary school. To highlight concerns that some pupils do not have the skills recognised by the framework for their level on the education ladder.

I have used it to inform much of my professional work and to draw others attention to information literacy issues—the document is an ideal way of introducing people unaware of the information literacy debate to its importance, since the document is clear, does not blind with science, is not patronising and can thus be viewed without prejudice or preconceptions. I have also put it to practical use by looking at science outcomes within a curriculum for excellence and matching these to the draft.

The University Learning and Teaching Strategy was updated. Consequently Library & Learning Services has developed a strategy to support the University one. We are now working to embed information literacy in the curriculum and to support this are developing skills framework at levels 4-6, plus postgraduate. The Scottish framework has informed our development. (Irving, 2007)

In Scotland the framework and the work of the project has been used by the project and others to advocate for and influence national policy regarding skills development and the Curriculum for Excellence and national consultation including the digital divide, and digital and media literacy.

Other countries have followed the project's progress with interest and used the framework to inform development of their own national framework. In the UK, Wales consulted the project (Crawford, 2009). At the 2010 Library and Information Literacy Annual Conference (LILAC) Wales acknowledged that the inspiration for their work came from the Scottish Information Literacy Project. Ireland has also been inspired by the project with Dr. Philip Cohen (head of Library Services, Dublin Institute of Technology) attending the project sessions at LILAC 2010. The project was mentioned by Siobhán Fitzpatrick, the president of the Library Association of Ireland in her LILAC dinner address (Scottish Information Literacy Project, 2010).

The promotion and use of the framework has been achieved through the work of practitioners, most notably, the project partners and advocacy work by the project.

## ADVOCACY

A large proportion of the project was spent on advocacy and promotional work through

- identifying key figures within government and nongovernment organizations;

- meeting, visiting, and discussing with above individuals and other interested parties;
- presenting, speaking and attending information literacy, educational, and relevant events (seminars, conferences, workshops);
- writing articles for journals and newsletters;
- participating in e-mail distribution lists;
- posting to the project blog; and
- networking with people at every opportunity.

This resulted in attracting attention from home and abroad:

- Phone calls, e-mails, from library and information professionals who want to introduce or improve IL in their institution
- Visits from Finland, Austria, Northern Ireland (representatives from Northern Ireland Libraries attended the 2008 Project Open Meeting)
- E-mails from Sri Lanka, India, Netherlands, Spain
- Invitations to speak at conferences and events (Scottish Information Literacy Project, 2010)

All we encountered were interested in and impressed with our cross-sector work and the work of our partners. Initially, our partners were in the school sector then in the workplace, adult literacies, and public libraries.

#### *Recognition of the Term "Information Literacy"*

Throughout the development of the framework and the project there was a need to explain the term, *information literacy*, its relevance for everyone, and the need for a national framework. Prior to the Scottish Parliament petition, contacts made with relevant NGOs and tentative contacts with the Scottish Executive Education Department showed an enormous need to raise awareness. Most NGO personnel believed that the issue was being dealt with elsewhere, did not understand what it meant, or did not know what could be done about it. The Scottish Parliament's petition system provided an opportunity to address this issue strategically. It also gave the issue credence and authority. The petition and responses from all relevant agencies are now public record (Scottish Information Literacy Project, 2006; Scottish Parliament, 2005a, 2005b, 2006).

While the term, *information literacy*, was not recognizable, the skills and competencies within the CILIP definition (CILIP, 2004a) used by the project were. This was further helped by using IL examples that related to the individual's environment, helping them to contextualize the skills and competencies in conversations about the project. As Catts and Lau state, IL "needs to be considered not only in relation to education, but also in the broader context of work, civil society, and health and well being" (2008, p. 9, cited by Andretta, 2009, p. 1). Andretta (2009) provides the visual metaphor of the Rubik's cube puzzle to represent the diversity of IL contexts and multifaceted nature of IL. Explaining that "each facet of

information literacy corresponds to one of the colors of the Rubik cube. At the start these facets are fragmented, and only by investigating the nature of these facets and the dynamics between them will we be able to see information literacy as an integrated, coherent but many sided whole” (p. 1).

### *Influence and Engagement*

*Curriculum Development: Engagement with Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).* This was not an easy task, but it was essential to gain recognition of IL in the new curriculum.

Although the term “information literacy” is not explicitly used in the Curriculum for Excellence, the CfE literacy team recognizes it as a key component of literacy and information literacy skills. Competencies can be found in the *Literacy Across Learning Framework* and experiences and outcomes (n.d.), most notably in the

- listening and talking section: finding and using information, understanding, analyzing and evaluating;
- reading sections: finding and using information, understanding, analyzing and evaluating, “to encourage progression in understanding of texts, developing not only literal understanding but also the higher order skills”; and
- writing section: organizing and using information (Curriculum for Excellence, n.d.).

For the Scottish Information Literacy Project and information literacy proponents, this recognition is an important achievement, achieved through diligent advocacy work. Proponents however need to note a closely linked skill recognized by the curriculum:

In particular, the experiences and outcomes address the important skills of critical literacy. Children and young people not only need to be able to read for information: they also need to be able to work out what trust they should place on the information and to identify when and how people are aiming to persuade or influence them. (Curriculum for Excellence, n.d., p. 20)

Engagement with CfE also highlighted concerns about teachers’ own information and critical literacy abilities along with their need for continuing professional development (CPD) activities in connection with the CfE. The project saw this as an opportunity to engage with teachers’ CPD, an area that had been difficult to reach and to look at early and first level classes (four- to six-year-olds). We carried out research and development in conjunction with the CfE literacy team on “Real and Relevant—Information and Critical Literacy Skills for the 21st Century Learner” (Early and First Level). The project’s aims were to create a quality CPD information literacy resource pack (Irving, 2010) containing

- background information on information literacy;
- learning and teaching approaches; and
- supporting resources.

The early and first level work would help to extend the early year's component of the framework.

*Engagement in the Wider World Outside Academia*

Although the project's initial aim was to link secondary and tertiary education, it soon became apparent that to be "effective, an information literacy policy must be firmly pegged to the information, lifelong learning, inclusion and digital policies of the state" (Crawford & Irving, 2007, p. 40). The project needed to engage in the wider world outside academia.

Examples of this included submitting evidence to the Scottish Executive Digital Inclusion Consultation in January 2006. This emphasized that although the digital inclusion document focused on skills, IL was conspicuously absent. Engagement with Ofcom Scotland (the communications regulator) resulted in the project providing them with strategy advice for media literacy, based upon the project knowledge, experience, and success with IL.

Engagement with the IL agenda also pointed to the need for advocacy to promote its importance in the employability and workplace agendas. Research carried out by the project (Crawford & Irving 2009; Irving 2006b, 2006c) had identified that although generally employers are not explicitly looking for information literacy skills and competencies by name, they are assuming that employees will come with these skills—particularly for professional positions. While people generally think they have the skills and competencies they need for their information-related activities (as defined by CILIP, 2004a), the reality is that

- individuals are learning these skills in varying degrees and in an ad hoc manner at work, further education, and university; and
- most people generally use what they already know and do not realize that there are invaluable skills and resources that could greatly assist them both in the workplace and in life.

If employers expect education to equip individuals with the necessary skills for employability, then information literacy needs to be explicitly included as a key life skill in the learning and teaching that takes place in school. It can then continue to be developed in further or higher education and in the workplace.

In promoting the importance of IL in the employability and workplace agenda, the project contacted employer organizations including the CBI (Confederation of Business) in Scotland, Chamber of Commerce (Glasgow), and Skills Development Scotland (SDS). Contacts in these organizations were provided by the project network of partners and attending net-

working functions. The most successful of these contacts proved to be SDS where the issue of IL and CPD for their staff and jobseekers was raised. In addition, a very successful open forum (Scottish Information Literacy Project, 2009) was held, bringing together a cross-sector of organizations interested in skills and employability. One output of the forum is an on-line IL Community of Practice *Creating an Information Literate Scotland* (Thomson, 2010). It is facilitated by Scottish Government project partners and is part of the Communities of Practice for Public Service, which “supports collaboration across local government and the public sector” and explores “ways of working to identify common solutions and share good practice and ideas” (n.d.).

The importance of information literacy as a civil right for the wider community also came to the fore. The Prague Declaration (2003) states:

Information Literacy encompasses knowledge of one’s information concerns and needs, and the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, organize and effectively create, use and communicate information to address issues or problems at hand; it is a prerequisite for participating effectively in the Information Society, and is part of the basic human right of life long learning.

Key players in the wider community lifelong learning agenda are adult literacy tutors and public libraries. The project engaged with both sectors. Funding enabled the project to examine IL and employability both in the workplace and at public libraries (specifically Inverclyde Public Libraries employability courses) (Crawford & Irving, in press). But there is a need for more research and development in this area.

#### *Professional Body (CILIP) Involvement*

The project was an early supporter of the Information Literacy Group (a CILIP Special Interest Group) and contributed to its discussions, advocacy work, and Library and Information Literacy Annual Conference (LILAC). We had long advocated that CILIP, as the professional body for library and information professionals in the UK, should have an IL strategy. The project engaged in roundtable discussions at CILIP; this produced two documents by CILIP’s Policy Officer: *Round Table Information Literacy Recommendations for IL Strategy* and the *Identification of Key IL Stakeholders*. An IL report presented at the July 2010 Policy Forum resulted in the establishment of an IL Task and Finish Group (T&FG). Project Director Dr. John Crawford, a CILIP trustee, was at the Policy Forum and became a member of the T&FG. The group

produced a Draft Vision Statement for Information Literacy and an outline strategy. This is in furtherance of the recommendations of the report of the Information Literacy Round Table (November 2009).

At this stage our proposed draft vision statement and strategy are indicative and illustrative rather than firm proposals. They are set out



to show the importance of Information Literacy to society and to CILIP and to make the case for our recommendation that information literacy should be a CILIP policy priority area for 2011. It will be for others to produce the definitive versions, but we hope that there is enough not only to show the importance of the issue but also an idea of the best approach and the size of the commitment (J. Crawford, personal communication, October 8, 2010).

CILIP Council subsequently agreed to support the recommendations of the T&FG. For IL proponents this is a key opportunity to achieve much on a national strategic level with outcomes that can be sustainable in the long term.

However, as Christine Bruce stated in an interview with Newton & Boden (2006):

We need a lot more lobbying on the importance of IL on the political front, with industry, with very senior people. We need money to flow to the IL agenda. . . . People need to concentrate on finding out who we should lobby and who should do the lobbying. We need people with political and marketing skills. . . . (pp. 4–5)

## CONCLUSIONS

The project did carry out much lobbying on the importance of IL on the political front, and with industry, targeting key decision makers. We worked hard in our advocacy and supported our partners and interested parties whenever we could.

At times it seemed as if the project was simply tinkering at the edges, particularly when progress was slow, identifying and finding key decision makers seemed elusive, or there was a lack of awareness of what IL was and how important it was as a key life skill for everyone.

However, as we engaged in aims and objectives that others had not undertaken and achieved major breakthroughs, it truly felt like pioneering work resulting in a successful initiative. Over the five-and-a-half years of the project, we have influenced practice, strategies, and policy making locally, nationally, and internationally.

Some may say the overarching national framework and the project aims and objectives were overly ambitious. Yet the seemingly impossible can be achieved with conviction and belief in yourself and what you propose. This belief and confidence is referred to as self-efficacy by Bandura (2010):

Perceived self-efficacy is concerned with people's beliefs in their ability to influence events that affect their lives. This core belief is the foundation of human motivation, performance accomplishments, and emotional well-being (Bandura, 1997, 2006). Unless people believe they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to undertake activities or to persevere in the face of difficulties. Whatever other factors may serve as guides and motivators, they are rooted in the core belief that one can make a difference by one's actions.



In addition to self-efficacy you also need

- project partners who are active practitioners, strong advocates, and believe in your vision;
- active networks;
- determination and perseverance;
- a keen eye for opportunities; and
- the ability to communicate outside your profession in language and terms that your audience can understand.

### *Lessons Learned*

Much can also be learned from experience and lessons learned during the five-and-a-half years of the project:

- Develop a community of practice to work together to identify common solutions and share good practice and ideas
- Develop partnerships and use networking; they are crucial, and you can achieve so much more with them
- Use both personal and professional contacts to identify project partners, key decision makers, and advocacy opportunities
- Work across sectors and not only with librarians and information professionals to develop collaborative partnerships. Much more can be achieved by learning and sharing knowledge with other professionals
- Balance the utilitarian educational agenda against personal social development
- Generate learning material content where needed, for example there is a dearth of material in the workplace and community learning. In community learning, adult literacy tutors have learning material that could be utilized and expanded to incorporate IL
- Develop strategies and advocacy from existing policies—it can open doors and provide opportunities and a higher profile platform for initiatives to be undertaken and implemented but does need to be kept up-to-date and relevant as policies change
- Identify organizations to work with—Skills, Curriculum, Community Learning Development, Communications Regulators such as Ofcom in the UK dealing with media or digital literacy
- Identify and use exemplars of good practice in your advocacy work
- Develop advocacy strategies: who to talk to, possible pitfalls
- Offer support to practitioners; they value support and encouragement. Benefits all parties involved.
- Have meetings and involve people to share experiences and inspire others to become active and work collaboratively
- Encourage writing and reporting of activities to encourage the sharing of knowledge and good practice among communities
- Evaluate what you do (Crawford, 2009)

The above are essential if you are to overcome barriers and constraints including the need for funding.

### *Sustainability*

The framework has been developed linking primary, secondary, and life-long learning including workplace and adult literacies. The question that needs to be asked is how sustainable is it?

Linking the framework to relevant policies and strategies means that the framework needs to be kept up-to-date and relevant. Without funding and support this is not possible. The final funding allowed for invaluable CfE early years work to be carried out and case studies to be included in the framework. However, without funding for updating the part of the framework that is linked to the CfE, the framework will lose its currency and its potential relevance.

### *The Future*

So what does the future hold for the framework with the end of the funding and the project?

The framework is about to enter a new stage in its development with a possible move from Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) to the City of Edinburgh Public Libraries.

With the support of Debbi Boden, director of Library Services at GCU (and chair of the CILIP IL Group), there is agreement regarding the framework's intellectual property rights (IPR). Eduserv, the original funders of the framework, is happy for the work to go ahead as long as future use does not include commercial exploitation of the framework. Further development of the framework can now take place.

Liz McGettigan, Edinburgh City librarian, is keen to develop the framework content in the areas of public health, job hunting, parenting, and supporting the service's virtual library. This will take the framework in the direction of lifelong learning, which needs to be strengthened.

This next stage and the key players to be involved have the potential to continue to do pioneering work influencing practice, strategies, and policy making locally, nationally, and internationally.

## NOTES

The Scottish Executive, which is now known as the Scottish Government, is responsible for most of the issues of day-to-day concern to the people of Scotland, including education. It is staffed with civil servants and is a separate body to the Scottish Parliament, which houses Scottish Members of Parliament and their staff. The Scottish Parliament has "devolved" powers within the United Kingdom. These include matters such as education, health and justice, rural affairs, and transport.

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